I CLAIM:

1 A coin validator including:

a coin insertion opening;

a coin return opening;

structure defining a coin path from the coin insertion opening to the coin return opening, which coin path includes a return region thereof that extends upstream from said coin return opening;

means to detect and identify an object in a detection region of said coin path; and

gate means in said coin path between such detection region and said return region responsive to identification of said object to either divert said object from said coin path or constrain it to traverse the path to said coin return opening;

wherein part of said structure is actuable to move so as to widen substantially the whole of said coin path including said return region, whereby to facilitate clearance of jams in said coin path.

2 A coin validator according to claim 1, wherein said structure includes a housing defining one side of the coin path and a cover means defining another side of the coin path, which cover means constitutes said part of said structure that is actable to move.

3 A coin validator according to claim 2 wherein said cover means is a door.

4 A coin validator according to claim 3, wherein said means to detect and identify an object includes a pair of detect elements respectively mounted in said housing and in said cover means.

5 A coin validator according to claim 1, wherein said part of said structure is such that, on its movement to widen the coin path, the whole of said path opens to form a chamber in which a coin at any location in the coin path above said return region can drop to said return region.

6 A coin validator according to claim 5, wherein the moveable part of the structure includes a rail defining the floor of an upper part of the coin path past said detection means.

7 A coin validator according to claim 1 wherein said moveable part of the structure remains substantially parallel to an opposed part of the structure, eg the housing, as it moves to widen the coin path.

8 A coin validator according to claim 7 wherein the moveable part of the structure, is attached by mounting means including two or more parallel slots and co-operating pins.

9 A coin validator according to claim 8 wherein there are four slot/pin pairs.

10 A coin validator according to claim 8, wherein said slots are formed as bent slots including slot portions oriented to accurately define the air gap width at the detection means.

11 A coin validator according to claim 1, wherein said means to detect and identify an object includes a pair of spaced opposed detect elements and an air gap in said coin path between said detect elements,

and further including means, s lectively releasable by a person who has inserted one or more coins into said coin insertion opening, to latch at least said actuable part of said structure in said detection region to hold substantially fixed the width of said air gap in said detection region.

12 A coin validator according to claim 11 wherein said moveable part of said structure is mounted whereby movement of said part includes a first segment of movement in which said latching means is engaged and a second segment of movement in which said latching means is released.

13 A coin validator according to claim 12 wherein said first segment of movement is such that the detection means is disabled before the latching means is released.

14 A coin validator including:

a coin insertion opening;

a coin return opening;

structure defining a coin path from the coin insertion opening to the coin return opening;

means to detect and identify an object in a detection region of said coin path, which means includes a pair of spaced opposed detect elements and an air gap in said coin path between said detect elements; and

gate means in said coin path responsive to identification of said object to either divert said object from said coin path or constrain it to traverse the path to said coin return opening;

wherein part of said structure is actuable to move so as to widen at least a portion of said coin path including said air gap, whereby to facilitate clearance of jams in said coin path;

and further including means, selectively releasable by a person who has inserted one or more coins into said coin insertion opening, to latch at least said actuable part of said structure in said detection region to hold substantially fixed the width of said air gap in said detection region.

15 A coin validator according to claim 14, wherein said structure includes a housing defining one side of the coin path and a cover means defining another side of the coin path, which cover means constitutes said part of said structure that is actable to move.

16 A coin validator according to claim 15 wherein said cover means is a door.

17 A coin validator according to claim 15, wherein said detect elements are respectively mounted in said housing and in said cover means.

18 A coin validator according to claim 14 wherein the moveable part of the structure includes a rail defining the floor of an upper part of the coin path past said detection means.

19 A coin validator according to claim 14 wherein said moveable part of the structure remains substantially parallel to an opposed part of the structure, eg the housing, as it moves to widen the coin path.

20 A coin validator according to claim 19 wherein the moveable part of the structure, is attached by mounting means including two or more parallel slots and co-operating pins.

21 A coin validator according to claim 20 wherein there are four slot/pin pairs.

22 A coin validator according to claim 20, wherein said slots are formed as bent slots including slot portions oriented to accurately define the air gap width at the detection means.

23 A coin validator according to claim 14 wherein said moveable part of said structure is mounted whereby movement of said part includes a first segment of movement in which said latching means is engaged and a second segment of movement in which said latching means is released.

24 A coin validator according to claim 23 wherein said first segment of movement is such that the detection means is disabled before the latching means is released.